

# Initial Educator Support System

## District Guide

**Deborah Mahaffey, Assistant State Superintendent**  
Division for Academic Excellence

**Kathryn Lind, Director**  
Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing Team

**Laurie Derse, Assistant Director**  
Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing Team



**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**  
**Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent**

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# Foreword



Our Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative provides the foundation for our New Wisconsin Promise to ensure a quality education for every child and close the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students, students of color, and their peers. To raise all students' achievement, we need quality teachers in every classroom and strong leadership in every school. In 1995, the State of Wisconsin embarked upon redesigning our professional education and preparation program approval process and professional educator licensing system to reflect the accomplishment and demonstration of accepted educational standards. This resulted in the implementation in 2000 of the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative as defined in PI 34, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

In the 2004–05 school year, 3,500 initial teachers were certified and licensed under the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative, PI 34. Recognized nationally for our high-quality teachers, we are positioned to do even more, thanks to the collaboration of local school districts, teachers and administrators, higher education, educator unions, professional and school board organizations, parent organizations, and the Department of Public Instruction.

As State Superintendent, I am pleased to lead this effort to enhance student learning by strengthening Wisconsin's teacher, pupil service personnel and administrator preparation. The Wisconsin Quality Education Initiative also provides a license renewal system based on performance standards that support the belief that educators need to be lifelong learners. Licensure is a pledge by the State of Wisconsin that the licensee is able to carry out the demands of the education profession. The new stages of licensure assure the public that licensed professional educators will maintain a commitment to the continued acquisition of knowledge and skills in their license categories. The Wisconsin Educator Standards as outlined in PI 34 provide the framework for educator preparation and ongoing professional development.

This guide is a tribute to my wonderful friend and dedicated former assistant state superintendent, Jack Kean. It was through Jack's leadership that this initiative was implemented successfully in Wisconsin. Jack was a true lifelong learner, who will be remembered as an outstanding educator and advocate of quality teachers for all students.

Elizabeth Burmaster  
State Superintendent



# Acknowledgments

## Initial Educator Work Group Members

A list of the members of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Teacher Quality Initial Educator Work Group, selected and appointed by the state superintendent, follows. Each member is identified by his or her employing district or organization at the time of service. A special thank you is due to the following individuals for their time, efforts, and recommendations as members of the work group:

Cathryn Atkinson	Teacher	Waukesha School District
Jane E. Baldridge	Chair, Education Department	Mount Mary College
Steven Behar	Teacher	Delavan-Darien High School
Rose Bowen	School Board Member	Oconto School District
Moreen Carvan	Associate Director UNITE	UW–Milwaukee
Jennifer Jones-Miller	Teacher	Milwaukee Public Schools
Sharon Nelson	Teacher	Waunakee School District
Terri Neumann	Teacher	Superior School District
Fred Poss	Teacher	Eau Claire Area School District
Jill Prushiek	Director of Field Experience	UW–Eau Claire
Gail Sanders	High School Principal	Milwaukee Public Schools
Suzanne Timmer	Certification Specialist	Waukesha County Technical College
Don Viegut	Director of Curriculum & Instruction	Merrill Area Public Schools

## DPI Staff

Mary Benzine, Education Specialist, Title II Teacher Quality Grant  
M. J. Best, Consultant, Teacher Education, Professional Development  
and Licensing Team  
Peter Burke, Director, Teacher Education, Professional Development  
and Licensing  
Lavern Jackson-Harvey, Consultant, Teacher Education, Professional  
Development and Licensing Team  
Kathryn Lind, Assistant Director, Teacher Education, Professional Development  
and Licensing Team

## Contributing Authors

Christine Maidl Pribbenow, Associate Researcher, UW–Madison  
Anne Rodgers-Rhyme, Rodgers Rhyme Associates, Madison  
Jill Prushiek, Director of Field Experience, UW–Eau Claire



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# Guide Overview

## CHAPTER

# 1

National predictions suggest that the nation's school districts will need to hire about two million new teachers during the next decade (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future 1996). This demand for new teachers reflects projected growth in student enrollment, as well as expected attrition from the profession. The cost of recruiting and training new teachers is high, and policy-makers have come to realize that a more cost-effective method of ensuring a supply of well-qualified teachers is to reduce the number of teachers who leave the profession.

The average rate of attrition for educators in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, and Indiana is approximately 50 percent, which is consistent with the national average (Theobald and Michael 2001). Furthermore, one-third of these educators leave within the first few years of teaching for both personal and professional reasons (Feiman-Nemser et al. 1999). It is during the initial years of teaching that educators need the support and guidance to remain in this challenging field.

It is due to this rate of attrition and the threat to student learning that prompted educators, administrators, and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to enact education licensing reform through the passage of Wisconsin Administrative Code, chapter PI 34. These rules identify and describe the ways in which school districts are required to support initial educators as they work under an Initial Educator License. This license is a five-year nonrenewable license is issued to newly certified beginning teachers, administrators, or pupil services personnel. See appendix B for relevant rules in chapter PI 34 law.



### PI 34.17 Initial Educator License

#### School District Requirements

- (a) The initial educator shall receive ongoing orientation from the employing school district which is collaboratively developed and delivered by school boards, administrators, teachers, support staff and parents.
- (b) The initial educator shall be provided support seminars by the employing school district which reflect the standards in subchapter II and the mission and goals of the school district.
- (c) The initial educator shall be provided with a qualified mentor by the employing school district. The mentoring period may be for less than 5 years.

There are three requirements that school districts are responsible for providing to initial educators. In short, these include ongoing orientation, support seminars, and a trained mentor. Some school districts already have these types of activities or programs in place. Others, however, will need to create and implement them for educators newly hired in their districts. Regardless of where districts are, the first large group of initial educators will be entering school districts in the fall of 2005. This guide was developed for school district personnel who are responsible for ensuring that the PI 34 rules regarding initial educators are followed within their districts.

## **How to Use This Guide**

This guide was designed for school district personnel who are responsible for the implementation of the PI 34 rules regarding initial educators. Although the rules regarding initial educators include teachers, administrators, and pupil services personnel, this guide will focus primarily on teachers, as they are the largest group of educators entering the field. However, the regulations and suggestions outlined in this guide apply to *all* initial educators, not just teachers.

The guide is broken into five sections, each of which can be read alone or in connection with the others. As mentioned previously, many school districts are providing some or all of the requirements listed in PI 34.17. This guide provides information and guidelines that all school districts might find valuable, regardless of the current opportunities they have available for initial educators. Although it contains some examples, they are provided only as suggestions for the framework and design of support systems. Administrative leaders and district steering committees will need to determine the ways in which the PI 34 rules will be implemented within their districts.

## **Why Develop Initial Educator Support Systems?**

Generally speaking, efforts to support initial educators are built on the simple premise that, no matter how strong their preparation experience, new teachers face challenges in managing and organizing a classroom for optimal student learning (Bartell 1995). The rationale for supporting new teachers is fairly intuitive—they should not be forced to “sink or swim” when first entering the profession (Feiman-Nemser 2001). Regardless of training and background, initial educators are immediately faced with major challenges, because teaching is one of the few professions in which

the novice is required to assume full responsibility on the first day of employment and is expected to perform the same tasks as a twenty-five-year veteran educator.

The experiences of the first days and years are critical and can either positively or negatively impact a teacher's career. The initial teaching experience affects not only the teacher but also, more importantly, students themselves. Inexperienced teachers may eventually acquire the skills and confidence of an experienced professional but, in the meantime, hundreds of students have not learned as much as they could have, in classrooms led by teachers who may have experienced professional success earlier had they been provided support and assistance (Feiman-Nemser 2001; Moir and Gless 2001). Clearly, support systems for initial educators can be crucial in ensuring that a teacher successfully makes the transition from beginning educator to competent veteran.

The literature refers to the first year(s) of teaching (generally from one to three years) as “induction,” which has the distinction of being in the “pivotal position between initial preparation and continuing professional development” (Feiman-Nemser et al. 1999, 3). In a review of the literature, induction is further defined in three ways:

- As a distinct phase in which educators feel intense anxiety and experience learning in ways that are significantly different from both previous and subsequent years
- As a time of transition in which a teacher moves from preparation to practice—otherwise known as “socialization”
- As a formal program that is planned and organized by local schools, districts, or professional development providers (Feiman-Nemser et al. 1999)

These distinctions are important because *how* induction is defined determines the ways in which support is provided to initial educators.

The DPI considers the initial educator stage to be a phase, a period of transition, and the programmatic responsibility of districts. Consequently, school districts in Wisconsin are required to support initial educators by providing ongoing orientation, support seminars, and mentoring. Of note is the idea that induction is a *process*—not just a discrete set of activities planned for educators. As such, initial support for educators is referred to as a “system,” which includes activities to

- ease the transition for the initial educator into teaching;
- promote the personal and professional well-being of initial educators;

- transmit the culture of the school system and the school to initial educators;
- increase the retention of promising initial educators;
- enhance student achievement;
- foster a better educational environment by breaking down the isolation of classroom teachers and by promoting cooperation among teachers and administrators;
- strengthen the relationship between institutions of higher education and local districts;
- continually renew the profession by providing opportunities for professional growth for both initial educators and veteran teachers; and
- begin the professional development plan (PDP) process.

The importance of developing a strong initial educator program is significant. It not only benefits beginning teachers and the profession as a whole but also it is good for the students beginning teachers will have in their classrooms and the families they will learn to support.

# Initial Educators' Needs

## CHAPTER

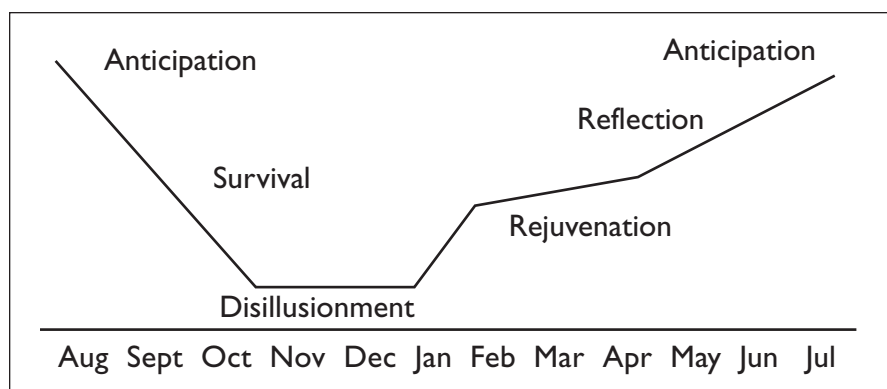
# 2

As mentioned in chapter 1, creating a system of support requires school districts to consider induction as a phase, a period of transition, and a set of distinct activities for initial educators. When developing these activities, it is important to be knowledgeable about the challenges and issues that educators face during this time of transition. This chapter provides a description of the induction phase and the corresponding needs of initial educators, both personal and professional.

### Phases of First-Year Teaching

In their first year of teaching, educators' experiences can be described in terms of contrasts—ups and downs, highs and lows, positives and negatives. These contrasts often follow a pattern throughout the school year. Researchers of initial educators have identified the following phases in the first year of being a new teacher (Santa Cruz New Teacher Project 1998):

- Anticipation phase—This phase occurs during preservice and is characterized by positive feelings and a romanticized view of teaching.
- Survival phase—Educators struggle to keep their heads above water during the first month of school and are consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. Yet during this time, they maintain energy and a commitment to teaching.
- Disillusionment phase—After the first few months teaching, new teachers often become burned out and are faced with the harsh realities of teaching, such as a huge time commitment, outside distractions (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, being evaluated), and classroom management issues. During this phase, teachers question their competence and whether they have made the right choice of profession.
- Rejuvenation phase—This phase usually begins in January, after new teachers have had the chance to relax and catch up. Having made it through the first semester, they decide to make some changes, are able to plan curricula ahead of time, and feel relieved for surviving the first semester.
- Reflection phase—At this point, educators are able to look back and reflect on their choices and both the positive and negative experiences from the previous school year. They begin to think ahead and envision what their next year will be like.



**Figure 2.1** Phases of First-Year Teaching

The phases of first-year teaching can be viewed in graphic form in figure 2.1. The chart, adapted by Lipton and Wellman (2003), is based upon Moir's (1999) work and illustrates the rollercoaster of emotions the initial educator experiences.

It is important to recognize how the first year can ebb and flow for a new teacher. Furthermore, induction activities should be geared toward the particular issues faced by initial educators to address their immediate concerns. The following table adapted from Lipton and Wellman (2003) demonstrates an example of induction activities that could be provided to initial educators throughout their first year of teaching. The example is based on a traditional calendar and should be modified for nonconventional school calendars, including year-round school.

Date/Time	Phase	Possible Activities
August/at least two weeks prior to the start of the school year	Anticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter or phone call to make informal contact.</li> <li>Informal get-acquainted meeting.</li> <li>Joint planning session.</li> <li>Informal sharing of teaching materials, files, bulletin board, displays, etc.</li> </ul>
August/week prior to start of the school year	Anticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share school layout, discipline policies, location/availability of resources/materials, etc.</li> <li>Share a welcome basket.</li> <li>Begin a collaborative professional development activity.</li> <li>Schedule a meet, greet, and share.</li> </ul>
September/first day of school	Anticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal check-in and mutual sharing.</li> <li>Schedule a new teacher breakfast, lunch, or after-school gathering.</li> </ul>

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Possible Activities</b>
September/one to two weeks into the school year	Anticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule conference times for: clarifications/questions/problem solving around groups of issues, materials, and classroom management.</li> <li>• Help with reflection and goals setting as they are related to the PDP.</li> <li>• Establish a basic contact schedule for the first month.</li> <li>• Leave notes of encouragement in the initial educator's mailbox.</li> </ul>
September	Anticipation moving toward Survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information/clarification regarding the local teacher evaluation policy, student progress reports, and grading.</li> <li>• Share procedures and tips for open house and parent/student conferences.</li> <li>• Review noninstructional duties (plan to accompany the first time).</li> <li>• PDP planning.</li> </ul>
October	Survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint planning for time management and new instructional units.</li> <li>• Discuss purchases and priorities for using any remaining funds.</li> <li>• Review teaching videos and discuss strategies/applications.</li> <li>• Emphasize contact schedule.</li> </ul>
October	Survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply a template for reflecting on a learner-focused conversation.</li> <li>• Initial educator support meeting.</li> </ul>
November	Disillusionment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create process for support and lifelines.</li> <li>• Encourage contact and activities with colleagues.</li> <li>• Discuss impact of student extracurricular activities.</li> <li>• Think aloud regarding student motivation.</li> <li>• Help initial educator schedule times to view colleagues' classrooms.</li> <li>• Share personal time management strategies or offer idea bank.</li> <li>• Schedule a problem-solving partnership meeting.</li> </ul>
December	Disillusionment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss pacing and curricular issues.</li> <li>• Calibrate overload and assist in determining priorities.</li> <li>• Provide information/clarification on semester exams and reporting to student/parents.</li> <li>• Think aloud regarding goals for second semester.</li> <li>• Celebrate success.</li> </ul>

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Possible Activities</b>
January	Rejuvenation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutual sharing of professional growth goals and strategies.</li> <li>• Joint planning for upcoming units.</li> <li>• Clarify schedules, record keeping, reporting, etc.</li> <li>• Encourage collaborative opportunities with other colleagues.</li> <li>• Attend professional development offering.</li> <li>• Discuss PDP and self-reflection.</li> </ul>
February	Rejuvenation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore team teaching opportunities.</li> <li>• Think aloud regarding student performance data and its use.</li> <li>• Collaborate on an action research project.</li> <li>• Jointly structure student data collection.</li> <li>• Clarify/share information regarding evaluations and schedules (spring break, student testing, etc.).</li> </ul>
March	Rejuvenation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss curricular pacing.</li> <li>• Think aloud on analyzing student performance data and exploring cause-effect relationships.</li> <li>• Provide information/clarification on student files/ records and student/parent conferences.</li> </ul>
April	Rejuvenation moving to Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutually share progress on professional growth plans.</li> <li>• Discuss end-of year schedules, final evaluations, student testing, field trip policies, etc.</li> </ul>
May	Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule a reflecting conversation.</li> <li>• Identify successes.</li> <li>• Assist in analyzing student performance data and exploring cause-effect relationships.</li> <li>• Facilitate connection making between personal learning and application to future decisions.</li> <li>• Final check for clarification on parent contacts and reports.</li> </ul>
June	Anticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate successes.</li> <li>• Think aloud regarding completion of record keeping and other end-of-year activities.</li> <li>• PD process; self-reflection/goal setting for PDP.</li> <li>• Share the load while ending the school year.</li> </ul>

*(An example of a school district's initial educator support system is found at the end of this chapter.)*



## What Are Initial Educators' Needs?

Initial educators are faced with many challenges as they move through the initial phase of a professional career as a teacher. These challenges include providing an effective learning environment and engaging students in the learning process, as well as addressing local, state, and national requirements and standards. In addition to addressing professional needs, they also must contend with personal concerns, such as feelings about their ability to be an effective teacher. In general, concerns that initial educators face include

- managing the classroom learning environment;
- managing time;
- planning and organizing curriculum;
- finding and using appropriate materials;
- adapting to a variety of pupil learning styles;
- evaluating student achievement;
- motivating students;
- communicating with students, parents, and colleagues;
- feeling isolated in the classroom; and
- adjusting to the teaching environment.

## Professional and Personal Needs

The initial concerns of beginning teachers often relate to how they manage their time and the classroom environment. The concern with classroom management focuses on teachers' skills and knowledge that promote student involvement in classroom activities and the effective use of classroom time. Time management is important when keeping students "on task" and when using teachers' own time in planning for their classes. Concerns about the organization of content and instruction are rooted in the ways that teachers sequence and arrange topics in the curriculum.

The need to establish new personal and professional relationships is another source of concern for initial educators. They are often not familiar with the names, faces, or personalities of those with whom they work, and they must undergo a process of socialization when they enter the new job. Furthermore, they must adjust to life both inside and outside of the school community because they may be moving to a new area and are possibly changing from college life to an urban, suburban, or rural lifestyle.

In addition to effectively managing the classroom and curriculum, beginning teachers are often fearful of being thought incompetent. In reality, they are faced with the expectation of performing as well as experienced teachers. This expectation causes beginning teachers to feel that

any requests for assistance would be interpreted as signs of incompetence. Consequently, beginning teachers tend to ask for assistance on safe problems, if they ask for assistance at all. Experienced teachers, on the other hand, may be hesitant to offer assistance because they do not want to interfere or do not want to become involved in the problems of beginning teachers.

## **Wisconsin Educator Standards**

In addition to the previously mentioned concerns and issues that most educators face as they begin their careers, teachers in Wisconsin will also need to be supported as they strive to meet the Wisconsin Educator Standards found in subchapter II, PI 34.02. See appendix C for a complete list of standards or go to the DPI website ([dpi.wi.gov/tepdll](http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdll)) for the complete list of standards for teachers, administrators, and pupil services personnel. Above all else, these standards assist initial educators in recognizing the link between teaching and student learning.

It is especially important that these standards are considered when developing any activities designed for initial educators. Ultimately, educators will be responsible for providing evidence that they have grown professionally in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with these standards as they seek continued and advanced licensure. For example, creating a Professional Development Plan, described in chapter 6, will require educators to address two or more of the Wisconsin standards.

## **How Initial Educator Support Systems Address Needs**

Many professional development needs are common to all beginning educators, such as those identified in the Wisconsin standards. Because these and other needs vary according to the individual teacher, support programs should emulate effective staff-development practice by being both individualized and developmental (Feiman-Nemser 2001). While initial educator support systems at the district level may target such needs as job orientation and, at the building level, integration into the culture of the school, these support systems should have at their heart the individual needs of their participants. Teachers, like the students they teach, are dynamic, changing, and growing individuals.

Although assistance could be based upon the findings of research that focuses upon the collective needs of initial educators, support systems are most successful when they are open-ended and include topics of particu-

lar interest to novice teachers. In other words, flexibility is critical when designing support systems for initial educators. The needs of teachers who are just entering the profession after completing their undergraduate work may be different from those of teachers who are changing grade levels, returning to the profession after an absence, have left another profession, or are veteran teachers new to the district. Similarly, a twenty-two-year-old initial educator may have significantly different needs from a forty-three-year-old initial educator. A flexible, teacher-centered support system makes it possible to meet the needs of all.

In initial educator support systems, the following aspects should be emphasized:

- The initial educator is a professional and should be treated as such. This implies that initial educators should have maximum input into the support system, as well as a sense of responsibility for their own learning.
- The initial educator, in facing the challenge of the classroom, will respond positively to a hands-on, problem-solving mode of learning. This implies support systems should be oriented toward what you will need tomorrow.
- The initial educator is in a position to learn experimentally. This implies that initial educators are eager to see how information fits into their existing schema in an interactive setting. Support systems should help initial educators to reflect upon their experience in an ongoing way so that they can make links between the theoretical and the practical.
- An initial educator support system should provide the first-year teacher with an environment in which it is safe both to request and to render assistance.
- As the year continues the needs of initial educators will change. This implies that initial educator support systems should evolve in order to meet changing needs. Typically, initial educators begin the year by focusing on their own professional survival. As mentioned earlier, they are overwhelmed by classroom management and personal time management concerns. As the year progresses, concern will shift to instructional and student achievement issues. The initial educator support system must shift with them.

Guskey (1995) suggests determining the optimal mix of professional development experiences that will work best in a “particular setting.” The following chapter does this by providing details about how to develop initial educator support systems that reflect the context and environment of

individual districts and schools, while keeping initial educators' professional and personal needs in mind.

Understanding the professional and personal needs of the initial educator will help districts develop a support system that not only assists teachers as they strive to meet the Wisconsin Educator Standards, but also helps them make the connection between teaching and learning.



## **Initial Educator Support System Example**

### **Waunakee Community School District's Induction Program**

Waunakee's Induction Program appointed a steering committee in 2001–2002 to make recommendations for change. Those recommendations included a set of criteria for mentor selection; a new process of matching mentors with new teachers, which involves administrators and teachers working together on those assignments; training of mentors through the Wisconsin New Teacher Project; and an increased honorarium for those who work with brand-new teachers. Recommendations were then presented to the following groups for input: current mentors and new teachers; administrators; an advisory board consisting of a parent, a second-year teacher, the district activities coordinator, and a board member; and an ad hoc committee of union representatives and administrators to discuss implications for contract language. In 2002–2003, the district had a teacher coordinator who worked with mentors and new teachers as they furthered their skills. All mentors are asked to observe new teachers in their classrooms and will receive assistance as they assess the needs of new teachers and help them move their practice forward.

# Developing a District-Level Initial Educator Support System

This chapter discusses the process by which a school district can begin to develop a system of support for its initial educators or to modify its existing one. It suggests some practices that a district can follow, with corresponding guidelines to ensure that best practices are considered.

## What the Initial Support System Is Not

The initial educator support system is not a one-day orientation alone, or a single day prior to the start of the school year. Orientation should be ongoing. A support system is not an assignment of a buddy who will check in with the initial educator once in a while. These buddies may not be trained to meet the needs of the initial educator or have time to spend after the first few weeks of school. Finally, support systems are not a cure-all for other problems that may exist in the building, such as overloaded teaching schedules, large class sizes, or high attrition of teachers.

## How Districts Vary

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to the organization of initial educator support systems. Designs differ because districts vary in size and in the nature and focus of their staff development plans. This guide is designed to meet the needs of different districts in Wisconsin.

The size of a school district impacts the design of an initial educator support system in a couple of ways. For example, if a district is large, it will have a sizeable “class” of initial educators every year. It will probably have a sufficiently varied staff that it can administer a support system involving different buildings, grade levels, and subject areas each year. Conversely, if a district is small, the needs of the few initial educators will have to be met by a smaller staff that may be hard-pressed to implement an intensive support system.

In practice, these considerations tend to be resolved in a variety of ways. For example, large districts often implement their own initial educator support systems because they have a greater number of new teachers, a variety of experienced teachers who are available to serve as mentors, and the staff development personnel who are necessary to implement an effective support system. Smaller districts have fewer resources and tend

to look to consortia run by regional organizations that serve groups of school districts or universities. Regardless of their size, all school districts should participate in a planning process that recognizes the importance of

- program vision;
- institutional commitment and support;
- quality mentoring;
- professional standards; and
- classroom-based teacher learning (Moir and Gless 2001).



### **School District Requirements**

**PI 34.17(2) (a)** The initial educator shall receive ongoing orientation from the employing school district which is collaboratively developed and delivered by school boards, administrators, teachers, support staff and parents.

## **What Is Involved When Developing Initial Educator Support Systems?**

Quality initial educator support systems tend to share common characteristics as they strive to retain educators and improve student learning. Creators of these support systems follow a process that includes several steps:

- Step 1. Establishing a district steering committee.
- Step 2. Identifying which educators will be considered initial educators.
- Step 3. Establishing goals and objectives for the initial educator support system that will address both educators' professional and personal needs.
- Step 4. Identifying district and building support to sustain the system.
- Step 5. Establishing how key personnel will play a role.
- Step 6. Creating an evaluation framework for the system.

Each of these steps requires key stakeholders, such as district administrators and principals, to examine the current context in which initial educator support occurs, while developing a system that improves the current situation.

### **Step 1**

#### **Establish a District Steering Committee**

Successful initial educator support systems have demonstrated that a district steering committee consisting of teachers, administrators, parents,

support staff, and school board members is essential in developing and achieving support system goals (Udelhofen 2001). The steering committee should play an important role in the process of clarifying the objectives of initial educator support systems and in communicating their importance to experienced and beginning personnel. This simple but easily overlooked step in the process is necessary to provide a sense of direction and to demonstrate school district commitment.

Furthermore, in the evaluation of the Wisconsin Peer Review and Mentoring Grant Program funded by Title II through the DPI, collaborating with others was a component of the most successful support systems. The school districts that received mentor grants also worked with local colleges and universities, the Cooperative Education Service Agency (CESA), or multiple-district consortia and depended heavily on the local administration of the school (Udelhofen 2001). Without the help of these stakeholders and a steering committee, the support systems lacked a common purpose and vision.

## **Step 2**

### **Identify Initial Educators in Your District**

Initial educators are defined as individuals who have successfully completed an approved program in education after August 31, 2004 and are licensed by the DPI for the first time. Although this definition holds true in most cases, some districts may wish to broaden their definition of initial educator to include educators who may have completed a program prior to August 31, 2004, however:

- have some teaching experience but are new to the state, district, or school;
- have obtained a license through alternative programs;
- have worked in the district, but not as a teacher;
- have new assignments, such as a change in grade level or subject; or
- have chosen teaching as a second career.

It is important to define who will be considered initial educators in your district so as to identify and contact those educators who will be participating in the various support systems offered.

## **Step 3**

### **Establish Goals and Objectives**

A district may wish to develop its own unique system design or adapt an existing model that has been established within the district or in another

school district or consortium. When establishing a system of initial educator support, it is important to operate from a clearly defined vision and to ensure that important support system components are consistent with this vision. Ultimately, the vision will be reflected in the identification and meeting of specific goals and objectives.

One of the first activities that a district should engage in when establishing an initial educator support system is to define the specific goals and objectives for the support system. Ultimately, meeting standards for both teacher and student learning are at the core of any initial educator support system. However, the district will need to move beyond these general goals and should define specific goals and objectives and how they will be achieved.

The National Education Association (NEA) Foundation for the Improvement of Education (1999) has identified questions to consider when developing a teacher mentoring program. These questions can be adapted to identify specific goals and objectives for initial educator support systems. In general,

- Do we have existing state or local educator support system policies and are these effective?
- What policies and practices are barriers to creating educator support systems?
- What are the particular needs of initial educators in the district?
- What specific program goals would meet the needs of initial educators?
- What are the district's philosophy and/or vision and how do these relate to the goals?
- Are the goals aligned with the Wisconsin Educator Standards?

Specific questions that help to frame the design of the initial educator support system include

- Who is responsible for integrating the initial educators into the work environment and culture of the district and building?
- How are educators helped to feel they are an important part of the building and district?
- How are educators assisted in learning and adopting the philosophy and culture of the district and building?
- How do educators learn about the availability and use of district resources (e.g., school personnel, instructional materials, and community supports)?
- Who is responsible for assessing and meeting the needs of initial educators as they change over time?



- How are educators given opportunities to see examples of effective instruction in the context of their building and in their subject area or grade assignment?
- How do educators accurately assess their own needs for, and progress in, meeting the Wisconsin Educator Standards?

Answering these questions provides the framework for creating an initial educator support system that has both the educators' and the district's needs and vision in mind.

## Step 4

### Identify District and Building Support to Sustain the System

Behind every successful initial educator system is formal district and local school support. This can be expressed and promoted in a number of ways. First, districts must provide the financial resources that are necessary to fund an effective support system. This is particularly the case in regard to compensation, often in providing release time, for initial educators and mentors. Second, districts must use the pool of talent that they possess to organize the support system and to anticipate the tasks that will need to be performed during its inception and implementation. Third, districts should give the support system adequate time to develop and to resolve the inevitable difficulties and mistakes that will arise during its first year.

Adequate time to receive assistance and perform special duties should be allocated for initial educators and mentors (Howey and Zimpher 1989). Participation in orientation, mentor training, support seminars, and professional guidance requires time. In many studies of programs that assist initial educators, the critical variable has been the provision of time for initial educators to work together, to observe classes, and to attend seminars for development and support. Local building policies are instrumental in providing this integral resource for new educators and others involved in the support system.

Because there is merit to the axiom that time is money, school districts should recognize that additional costs might be incurred if they commit themselves to a well-structured system of initial educator support. These costs are often incurred when initial educator assignments are adjusted to provide them with the following:

- reduced workload;
- release from outside duty or extracurricular assignments;
- no assignment to challenging classes; and
- availability of common preparation time with department heads, mentors, and other common grade-level and subject teachers.

In the short term, these conditions may impact a district's budget; in the long term, the investment in both time and money will have

- extensive payoffs in initial educators' ability to teach;
- reduced costs incurred by high retention;
- encouraged a professional learning community climate;
- improved organizational effectiveness and parent satisfaction; and
- ultimately, improved student learning.

Another area to consider in developing a support system for initial educators is incentives for the mentor. Educators implementing a PDP for relicensure will be using a variety of activities for documentation to gain that license. As an example, educators who act as mentors might want to include their mentoring work in their PDP. Others will take graduate-level courses. Because accumulating credits will not be the only way to relicensure, salary schedules that provide means for advancement that include compensation for activities in addition to credits will be necessary.

## **Step 5**

### **The Role of Leadership**

Research indicates that support systems for initial educators, including mentoring, are most likely to succeed when building administrators are committed to and exercise leadership in establishing and implementing any type of support activity (Udelhofen 2001). These findings are consistent with other research that suggests effective schools have effective leaders (Fullan 1991). Without the direction and support of the leader, even the best intentions can fall short of expectations.

The principal plays a critical role in the success of initial educator support systems. Principals need to be aware that new teachers cannot be compared to veteran teachers—becoming a quality teacher is a developmental process. Induction needs to include orientation to the school as well as to the profession. Principals also need to realize that induction goes beyond orientation sessions and includes the development of effective teaching practices, such as those supported by the Wisconsin Educator Standards. Furthermore, principals need to have an in-depth understanding of the environment in which the teachers work. To understand the work context, the following questions should be considered by principal leaders:

- What is the essential content that defines what students should know and be able to do?
- What instructional practices are we working toward in the building?
- What classroom assessment practices are we working toward in the building?

- What is the climate we are striving for in the building?
- What are the standards and processes by which educators will be evaluated?
- What are the staff development expectations and support in the building?
- What is the philosophy of education modeled in the building (e.g., “all kids can learn”)?
- What is the philosophy of teacher involvement in professional learning communities?

Furthermore, clear expectations are essential to the effectiveness of any support system. Success in the performance of support activities requires that participants know the what, when, where, and with whom of the support system. Because most program models involve several experienced professionals in leadership roles (in addition to the participating initial educators), it is important to provide orientation and training activities for experienced educators, building administrators, and mentors who will assume leadership roles in the support system. (*See school district example at the end of this chapter.*)

## Step 6

### Create an Evaluation Framework

A discussion of evaluating a system for initial educator support is too extensive for the purposes of this guide. Rather, this section provides general guidelines and questions to consider when designing support systems for initial educators. For an in-depth discussion about evaluation, see Guskey (2000).

#### **Guidelines for Evaluating Professional Development**

1. Clarify the intended goals.
2. Assess the value of the goals.
3. Analyze the content.
4. Estimate the program’s potential to meet the goals.
5. Determine how the goals can be assessed.

(continues)

6. Outline strategies for gathering evidence.
7. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' reactions.
8. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' learning.
9. Gather and analyze evidence of organization support and change.
10. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' use of new knowledge and skills.
11. Gather and analyze evidence of student learning outcomes.
12. Prepare and present evaluation reports (Guskey 2000, 91).

During the planning stages of creating a support system, the evaluation process should include the following (Guskey 2000):

1. Clarify the intended goals—In this case, the goals are to develop and meet the needs of initial educators, both personally and professionally. Further, they are to help educators meet the Wisconsin Educator Standards.
2. Assess the values of the goals—Are all stakeholders aware of these goals and do they find them valuable and important? These goals need to be shared with the steering committee and the planners and implementers of the support system.
3. Analyze the context—The district's and schools' strengths and weaknesses should be identified, including teachers' problems and needs, available resources, the level of parental support, and the organizational climate.
4. Estimate the program's potential to meet the goals—If an initial educator support system is already in place, what are the program's strengths and shortcomings? Furthermore, how will research about induction inform the creation of the system?
5. Determine how the goals can be assessed—"Decide up front what evidence you would trust in determining if the goals are attained. Ensure that evidence is appropriate, relevant to the various stakeholders, and meets at least minimum requirements for reliability and validity" (p. 90).
6. Outline strategies for gathering evidence—What type of evidence will be gathered and who will gather it? Both formative and summative evaluation activities should occur, while using both qualitative and quantitative forms of data collection.

7. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' reactions—Collect information from participants about their experience in various initial educator activities.
8. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' learning—What are the indicators that suggest the participants are learning? Select or construct instruments to assess if learning is occurring.
9. Gather and analyze evidence of organization support and change—Determine the organizational characteristics and attributes that are necessary for success in the district and individual buildings.
10. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' use of new knowledge and skills—Develop indicators about the degree and quality of change in initial educators and determine the best methods to collect this information. This information should be used to provide constructive feedback to guide and evaluate the educators.
11. Gather and analyze evidence of student learning outcomes—Collect student information that relates to the system's goals—i.e., improving initial educators' practice.
12. Prepare and present evaluation reports—Develop reports that are clear and comprehensible to those who will use the evaluation reports. Also, present the findings to key stakeholders, such as district administrators, school boards, school administrators, and the educators themselves.

These twelve points should be used as guidelines and adapted to develop an orientation framework for educator support systems in Wisconsin school districts. Once again, evaluation is a lengthy and ongoing process—further study may be necessary to create a framework that provides a district with information about evaluating the effectiveness of a particular initial educator support system and its corresponding programs.

## **Benefits of Establishing Effective Initial Educator Support Systems**

School districts that have implemented and evaluated their initial educator support systems cite several benefits to the employing district, such as the following:

- enhanced student achievement;
- the development of a community of learners;
- an investment in personnel; and
- an enhanced climate of professionalism.

Furthermore, building administrators noted some of the beneficial impacts of initial educator support systems on their work. They observed that these support systems

- foster positive working relationships in the building;
- provide a professional alliance between an inexperienced educator and others;
- open lines of communication between new staff and the administration; and
- stimulate, renew, and rejuvenate the veteran teacher.

School districts that orient, train, and assist initial educators visibly demonstrate their commitment to quality education. Along with other forms of staff development, support systems that provide initial educators assistance contribute to enhanced professionalism in schools.

Quality educators enable quality education. As school districts strive to ensure that their students receive a quality education, it becomes essential to implement professional development activities. These activities enhance the capability of school personnel to promote a school climate that is conducive to learning. Initial educator support systems ensure that a seamless, ongoing teacher development program continues throughout a teacher's career. The specific skills necessary for an educator in specific school settings are different from the general preparation by a degree-granting institution. Support during the initial years of employment is necessary to help initial educators transition to the school and district. The following chapter describes how ongoing orientation and support seminars are integral aspects of initial educator support systems.



### **Initial Educator Support System Example**

#### **Hartford Union High School's Administrative and District Support**

At Hartford Union High School the orientation actually begins when potential candidates are interviewed. Information about the school is provided ahead of time. Each candidate is also given a tour of the school. Once the person is hired they receive additional information in the summer. All administrators follow the same procedures.

In August, prior to the start of school there is a three-day orientation for all teachers, pupil services personnel, and administrators new to the district. The orientation agenda is jointly developed with the teachers' union and union members take part in the activities during the three days. All administrators are required to take part in the orientation activities.

*(continues)*

Each new staff member is assigned a mentor (agreed upon by the union and administration). In addition to the mentor, each person is assigned a collegial coach and the department chairperson also provides support. Responsibilities for each of these individuals are spelled out in the professional development notebook.

Support seminars are provided on a monthly basis. Reflection documents have been created to help new staff members develop their professional development plans. The template for the plan is included in the electronic portfolios Hartford Union High School makes available to all staff members. Support is provided through three levels of graduate classes and other assistance. All administrators have electronic portfolios and PDPs to serve as role models for other educators in the district.





## CHAPTER

# 4

# Guidelines for Developing Ongoing Orientation and Support Seminars

Guskey (1995) noted that the professional development experiences of beginning teachers have remained the same for the past three or four decades. This is an unfortunate consequence of a model of professional development that is based on antiquated notions about how adults learn. Initial educator support systems are usually short term and lack coordination between the needs of the new teacher and the support that is provided to them. Feiman-Nemser (2001) warns:

*Unless we take new teachers seriously as learners and frame induction around a vision of good teaching and compelling standards for student learning, we will end up with induction programs that reduce stress and address immediate problems without promoting teacher development and improving the quality of teaching and learning.*

As defined in PI 34.17, school districts are responsible for providing initial educators with ongoing orientation and support seminars.



### School District Requirements

**PI 34.17(2)(a)** The initial educator shall receive ongoing orientation from the employing school district which is collaboratively developed and delivered by school boards, administrators, teachers, support staff and parents.

**(b)** The initial educator shall be provided support seminars by the employing school district which reflect the standards in subchapter II and the mission and goals of the school district.

### Ongoing Orientation

Though the needs of the initial educator may vary, there is general agreement that the initiation of teachers into the profession should entail more than handing them the keys to a classroom (Feiman-Nemser et al. 1999; Feiman-Nemser 2001). Initial educators need an orientation to the culture

and climate of the school, if they are to become a part of it. They will need to learn in an ongoing way the explicit and the tacit expectations of performance. They will face questions in practice that previously they may have only addressed in theory. They will need to develop support systems to help sustain their energy and commitment to their new profession.

Research on the program needs of initial educators shows that a one-day orientation at the beginning of the year is not sufficient (Santa Cruz New Teacher Project 1998). Initial educators who are primarily concerned about arranging their rooms, finding supplies, and preparing for the first few days of school are less concerned about the scope and sequence of district curriculum, staff evaluation, or the school improvement plan. Although these are important topics, they are more appropriate for future orientation sessions.

On a separate day of orientation, prior to the opening day, an inservice program should be scheduled for initial educators. Ideally, the program should contain most of the following elements:

- information about the teacher contract and fringe benefits, including contractual rights and responsibilities;
- building and district goals;
- a presentation about district policy relevant to the opening of school;
- orientation to the building that addresses policies and procedures;
- an initial meeting between the educator and mentor;
- a panel of previous initial educators who can provide helpful hints;
- an initial educator guide, for example, the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) *Beginning Teacher Handbook*;
- a tour of the community; and
- procedures for using sick days and personal leave.

Following the initial orientation, subsequent support seminars and ongoing orientation should address policies and procedures as they become more relevant to the initial educator. These seminars could be scheduled or incorporated into the school district's inservices, early release days, and so forth. Examples of suggested topics would be

- student grading system and procedures;
- special services;
- parent conferences;
- the scope and sequence of the school curriculum;
- the school assessment system;
- teacher evaluation system; and
- special needs referrals.

Finally, two orientation activities that have proven to be effective—an opening welcome dinner and a recognition dinner at the end of the year. Together, they provide a professional beginning and ending to the initial year of teaching.

## Support Seminars

In general, support seminars should be centered on specific needs or concerns of the initial educator. The use of a seminar format does not imply that a speaker should address an audience for an hour. Research indicates that seminars should combine a presentation of materials that bear directly upon the classroom needs of initial educators and an open discussion between initial educators or between mentors and initial educators (Moir and Gless 2001). The combination of presentation and discussion will ensure that seminar topics are tailor-made to meet the needs of individuals and situations in the district. Furthermore, the seminar topics should be aligned with the Wisconsin Educator Standards.

Research on best practices in developing induction and continuing professional development programs suggest the following (Guskey and Huberman 1995):

1. They are ongoing.
2. They are embedded in educators' daily practice.
3. They are not one-shot inservices.
4. Educators are provided ample opportunity for experimentation and reflection.
5. Educators are provided release time.
6. Educators are compensated.
7. Educators' experiences are collegial and team oriented.

These characterize the “process” of effective professional development. Interviews conducted with initial educators over the last several years have provided clear evidence of the need for support seminars that treat specific concerns as they emerge throughout the year (Santa Cruz New Teacher Project 1998); in other words, the content. Initial educators have indicated that seminars on topics such as classroom management, parent conferences, teaching strategies, and motivation have provided them with useful hands-on activities for the classroom. As stated earlier, seminars should be collaborative, interactive sessions using someone to facilitate the process. Further, support seminars provide initial educators with the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns among themselves. This parallel function of the seminars helps to develop informal support

systems among the initial educators that are invaluable during their initial year of teaching.

The number and topics for seminars will vary according to the needs and organizational structure of districts. The following list of suggested seminar topics, with corresponding educator standards, is based on the typical needs of initial educators:

- Classroom Management/Time Management (Standard 5)
- Parent Conferencing and Communicating with Others (Standard 10)
- Student Learning Standards and Assessment (Standard 8)
- Student Learning Styles and Motivation (Standard 5)
- Peer Mediation and Team Collaboration (Standard 10)
- Maintaining Your Mental Health (Standard 9)
- Instructional Strategies (Standard 7)
- Long-Range Curriculum Planning (Standard 1)
- Diversity in the Classroom (Standard 3)
- Legal Aspects/Contractual Issues (Standard 10)

These suggested topics have been highlighted in the research-based literature on beginning teachers and the sequence is based upon the recommendations of initial educators who have provided end-of-the-year evaluations of their experience. The list, however, is not exhaustive. It reflects some of the most critical issues identified by initial educators.

To identify key needs of initial educators in a particular district, the district could provide a test of the Wisconsin Educator Standards for Teachers and ask each initial educator, along with veteran teachers, to list several ideas for support seminars after each standard. A list of seminar ideas could be compiled and veteran teachers could be selected to help with the implementation of the seminars. Further, a district could collaborate with a local college/university and offer credit for participation in the seminars.

As mentioned previously, initial educators value the opportunity to talk with other teachers at support seminars. The opportunity to listen to other initial educators' concerns, and to share their own, helps break down the sense of isolation that comes from feeling that "I am alone." First-year teachers also cite the importance of having a list of other initial educators in their district or region. Access to the names, subject areas, and phone numbers of other initial educators provides them with other sources of support and assistance.

## Benefits to the Initial Educator

During interviews and surveys of new educators who were involved in initial educator support systems throughout Wisconsin, participants cited many of the special benefits of initial educator support. They observed that the support systems

- provided a communication network with other initial educators;
- assisted in the transition from preservice to the professional world;
- helped the teachers to be analytical about their teaching and to improve upon its effectiveness;
- refined the meaning of “educator” and helped each teacher realize that he or she learns and grows with other professionals;
- reduced the isolation of the classroom by providing a means to share and communicate with colleagues;
- provided opportunities for both formal and informal contact between principals and initial educators; and
- assisted the teacher in problem solving.

Clearly, effective orientation and support seminars provide many benefits to initial educators. As mentioned previously regarding PI 34, these support systems need to be collaboratively developed and delivered. Members of the community, veteran teachers, administrators, institutions of higher education, and others can collaborate to establish long-term partnerships and provide valuable information to new educators as they begin their careers. Also, the seminars need to fulfill the overarching vision of the district and be consistent with the Wisconsin Educator Standards. Specifically, support seminars should emphasize key learning tasks of initial educators, including local knowledge, curriculum and instruction, effective teaching strategies, creating a classroom learning community, developing a professional identity, and learning from practice.

The following chapter will describe how mentoring is also a means by which initial educators can gain the necessary information to improve and enhance the practice of teaching.



# Guidelines for Developing a Mentor Program

## What Is a Mentor Program?

The American Federation of Teachers (1998) suggests that the common thread of all mentoring programs is the pairing of a beginning teacher with a more experienced mentor. Just as the initial educator support system needs a vision to guide and help focus efforts, so does the mentor program within the support system. Along with a clearly defined mission and an evaluation component, the district's mentor program should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, such as the administrator, mentor, and initial educator.

Many school districts in Wisconsin already have mentoring programs in place—some were organized through funding from the Wisconsin Peer Review and Mentoring Grant Program, as stated earlier, and others have created their own programs using local funds (Udelhofen 2001). Regardless, much can be learned from the evaluation of these programs and the wealth of information found in the literature. In Wisconsin, the strongest mentor programs shared a number of characteristics. They

- had a district steering committee to provide vision and direction for the program;
- collaborated with a number of stakeholders within the district;
- used PI 34 rules as the overarching theme around which the program was centered;
- exposed participants to the Wisconsin Educator Standards and used these standards to set goals;
- involved administrators who provided support; and
- used needs assessments to develop and refine the program (Udelhofen 2001).

The rules in PI 34 provide a clear definition and define the district's responsibility for providing initial educators with a mentor:



### Definitions

**PI 34.01(34)** “Mentor” means an educator who is trained to provide support and assistance to initial educators and who will have input into the confidential formative assessment of the initial educator and who is not to be considered as part of the formal employment evaluation process. *(continues)*

## School District Requirements

**PI 34.17(2)(c)** The initial educator shall be provided with a qualified mentor by the employing school district. The mentoring period may be for less than 5 years.

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education (1999) suggests a number of questions to consider when creating a mentor program:

1. Are there local policies currently in place and are these effective?
2. What policies and practices are barriers to mentoring and how can these be overcome?
3. What partners should be involved in the creation and implementation of the mentoring program and defining the mission?
4. How long will an initial educator be involved in the program?
5. How will mentors be selected?
6. How will mentors be trained?
7. How long will mentors serve in this role?
8. How frequently should mentoring activities occur?
9. What operational changes need to be made in our schools to make mentoring possible?

These questions should be considered during the formation stage of the development of a mentoring program. Once answered, the mentoring program needs to have its most valuable asset in place—the mentors themselves.

## Mentor Training

To ensure the goals of the mentor program are met, mentors need to be properly trained. Training should include information on their responsibilities with initial educators and program expectations. Not every educator will make an effective mentor but many educators could become effective mentors when given proper guidance, support, and training. Districts are encouraged to set up yearly training for mentors to outline mentor program expectations. Even experienced mentors can benefit from having their skills reinforced on an annual basis. Meetings scheduled prior to the start of the school year are a good time to lay out program guidelines. Mentor/program evaluations at the end of the school year will be an excellent source of feedback to help guide the program and provide the mentor with helpful comments. The DPI has developed a two-day



mentor orientation that districts may incorporate in their mentor training. It is available at [dpi.wi.gov/tepdll](http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdll).

## Confidentiality

PI 34 rules define a qualified mentor as an educator who is trained to provide support and assistance to initial educators. Because of the ongoing relationship between mentor and new teacher (a year or more), mentors will have input into the confidential formative assessment of the initial educator. This relationship should remain confidential in order to establish a level of trust for discussing critical issues. The rules state that the mentor must *not* be considered as part of the formal employment evaluation process. Although the definition of a qualified mentor is broadly defined in PI 34, district steering committees may identify additional qualities and criteria for becoming a mentor.

## Guidelines for Selecting and Retaining Mentors

A mentor program needs the vision and commitment of a full- or half-time coordinator who is responsible for the selection of the mentors and for the ongoing administration and responsibilities of the program. Even more important than having a coordinator, however, is the selection of mentors. Selection of individual mentors should be based upon the identification of clearly defined characteristics and qualifications defined in the district's program. The qualities listed here are not absolutes but are guidelines to help in mentor selection. Ultimately, the selection of a mentor should focus upon the veteran teacher who meets the following criteria and exhibits a desire to share personal and professional knowledge and experience in helping another teacher grow in the profession. In general, research suggests the following criteria when selecting a mentor. The mentor

- is respected by both peers and administration as a role model in the profession;
- has strong interpersonal relationships or skills;
- is able to develop a trusting, respectful, and confidential relationship;
- demonstrates curiosity and an eagerness to learn; and
- is *not* an administrator or someone in an evaluator position (American Federation of Teachers 1998; Feiman-Nemser 2001; Serpell 2000).

At the same time, good teachers do not automatically make good mentors (Feiman-Nemser 2001). These educators also need the ability to

maintain personal relationships and be willing to learn about providing feedback and working with their peers.

In Wisconsin school districts, it is also recommended, and sometimes required, that the mentor

- hold the professional educator license, five-year renewable license, or life license (required);
- have at least three years experience in the district;
- complete mentor training (required);
- demonstrate knowledge of the Wisconsin Educator Standards and have the ability to convey knowledge of the standards to colleagues;
- demonstrate knowledge about creating a PDP and be able to convey such knowledge to colleagues;
- volunteer and be selected and assigned to initial educators by a collaborative committee composed of teachers, administrators, and pupil services professionals.

## **Mentor Role and Responsibilities**

Once the mentor is selected, the mentor provides various means of support. Categories of support that the mentor provides can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Building and maintaining relationships—The processes of building and maintaining relationships require initial efforts, tending, patience over time, confidentiality, and persistence. Mentors need to be adept at both building and maintaining relationships.
- Networking—Mentors need to be skilled networkers with access to contacts from whom to draw expertise, resources, and information.
- Coaching—Mentors need to be skilled at providing information when appropriate, while challenging educators to discover knowledge on their own. For example, a mentor can help an educator to discover his or her instructional style, observe the initial educator's classroom and give feedback, and suggest ideas related to discipline and to scheduling, planning, and organizing the school day.
- Communicating—Mentors need to build enough trust to encourage open communication by being authentic, listening effectively, checking for understanding, and articulating clearly and unambiguously.
- Encouraging—Mentors can encourage initial educators by confidence building, challenging at the right time and in an appropriate manner, motivating, and inspiring.

- **Facilitating**—Mentors can facilitate learning by establishing a hospitable climate for learning and promoting self-directed learning. This can be accomplished through reflection, demonstration of teaching, and conferencing.
- **Goal setting**—Mentors will play an integral role in the initial educator’s creation of a PDP. The best way to accomplish this is to have mentors who have personal experience creating a PDP. Mentors should also be skilled in assisting initial educators in crystallizing, clarifying, and setting realistic goals to complete their plans.
- **Guiding**—Mentors help to prepare the initial educators for what they are about to experience in their first year of teaching. Guides can also help educators to keep focused on meeting the Wisconsin Educator Standards and by helping them develop their PDPs.
- **Problem solving**—Mentors can assist initial educators in the solution of problems. Mentors do not solve problems for initial educators but provide assistance using various problem-solving strategies.
- **Providing feedback**—Mentors need to know how to provide constructive feedback and assist the initial educator in asking for feedback. Feedback can be provided through conferencing, observation, and journaling.
- **Reflecting**—Mentors should be comfortable with reflection, which includes modeling how one can evaluate, process, assess, and articulate learning and apply that learning to future action. Reflection helps facilitate growth in both the initial educator and the mentor.
- **System information**—Mentors need to give information about procedures, guidelines, and expectations of the school district, as well as those found within the local school.

## Sample Mentor Activities

Month	Sample Activity	Standard
August, or prior to the start of the school year	Assist initial educator with preparing for the opening of school. Discuss classroom management techniques for the first week of school.	WI teacher standard 5
September	Work on classroom behavior and student motivation techniques.	WI teacher standard 5
October	Develop strategies for student learning issues to be used when working with parents.	WI teacher standard 10

<b>Month</b>	<b>Sample Activity</b>	<b>Standard</b>
November	Help initial educator prepare a lesson that addresses barriers that impede learning and adapts instruction to meet desired needs.	WI teacher standard 3
December	Reflect on student needs and successes. Review lesson planning and talk about strategies for multiple learning styles.	WI teacher standard 2
January	Discuss assessment strategies for multiple learning styles.	WI teacher standard 8
February	Work on technology associated with curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	WI teacher standard 4
March	Work on instructional techniques for questioning of students to promote active learning.	WI teacher standard 6
April	Help initial educator prepare a lesson that uses the expertise of the larger community.	WI teacher standard 10
May	Reflect on the successes and challenges of the past school year.	WI teacher standard 9

## Matching Mentors and Initial Educators

Although the PI 34 rules do not specifically outline procedures for matching mentors with initial educators, several suggestions are identified here that may assist a school district.

Suggested criteria for matching mentors and initial educators:

- similar subject and grade-level job assignments; and/or
- close proximity of the mentor and initial educator to facilitate frequent contact (American Federation of Teachers 1998; Scott 2000).

The principal and the district steering committee members should carry out the matching process. A mentor program coordinator may have insights into the effectiveness and strengths of an experienced mentor and therefore should be involved in matching. The program coordinator's involvement is also necessary so that he or she may have an ongoing role in supporting the mentor and in monitoring the effectiveness of the match.

In some districts in Wisconsin, the formal mentor program allows for a change between the mentor and initial educator. (*See the school district example later in this chapter.*) This practice allows for the assigned mentor and initial educator to mutually agree that their relationship is not working and a new match needs to be made after nine weeks. The program coordinator may want to address this issue at separate meetings with the mentors and initial educators and stress that if a problem arises, the parties involved need to contact the coordinator to set up another match immediately. Furthermore, the program coordinator should take some time and listen to the concerns so that future problems can be avoided.

Matches between mentors and initial educators are rarely perfect. Rather, a match is successful if the mentor volunteers for the role, wants to assist new teachers, and is matched with an educator who is open to guidance and support.

### **Suggestions for an Effective Mentoring Relationship**

Once the match between mentor and initial educator has been made, the mentors may have questions and concerns regarding their new role. The first concern mentors may express after volunteering for their role is that they already have a busy schedule, and how will they find time? Furthermore, they may be concerned about their ability to be an effective mentor for the initial educator. Finally, they may question their ability to self-reflect, an important skill for their own teaching practice as well as a model for the initial educator. A supportive administrator should remind the mentors that they will be given the time and other resources necessary to be an effective mentor (Udelhofen 2001).

Some incentives may include

- release time for both mentor and initial educator;
- provision of a substitute to the initial educator so he or she can observe other classes; and
- formal recognition of the leadership contributions made by mentors (Sweeny 1994).

Other incentives for mentors may include compensation, the opportunity to attend a conference or workshop with the initial educator, tuition for graduate work targeted for mentor training, use of university interns to allow meeting time, or observation time for mentor and initial educator.



## Initial Educator Support System Example

### Eau Claire Area School District's New Teacher/Mentor Program

The goals of this mentor program include

- to cooperatively enhance beginning teacher performance;
- to cooperatively retain beginning teachers in the profession;
- to cooperatively improve professional collegiality;
- to jointly facilitate the personal and social adjustment of the new teacher to the school and the community;
- to jointly provide an understanding of the specific school climate to the new teacher;
- to jointly instill an understanding of the educational culture of the Eau Claire Area School District.

In this program, a veteran staff person is voluntarily linked with a new staff person for a minimum of nine weeks. Training opportunities are made available for the veteran mentor. The new teacher and veteran mentor fill out a contract every nine weeks. This contract specifies cooperatively agreed-upon goals that the new and veteran person will work on and provides incentive options that the veteran may choose as a result of the nine weeks of service. It is encouraged that the same people stay together for the whole year, but this relationship can be changed every nine weeks. During this time, the new teacher and veteran mentor meet regularly to discuss issues that surround their nine-week goals, along with other things that the new teacher may need.

Mentoring an initial educator is a beneficial and enriching experience. Mentors become more reflective of their own teaching practices because of their role as mentors. Here are some tips for beginning mentors that are worthy of reflection as they begin their relationships with initial educators:

- Keep the relationship confidential if peers and administrators inquire about it.
- Encourage the initial educator to reflect on and question his or her teaching practices. Take the time to debrief various teaching situations and challenge the initial educator to explain the how and why of his or her reaction.
- Be positive and supportive. Don't relay horror stories of your past. In most cases, the past and present situations are not identical and the educator will not find the story comforting.
- Build the relationship on mutual respect and honesty.

- Time your advice carefully. Initial educators will ask for advice when they need it.
- Be willing to back off and don't get defensive if the initial educator has another idea or doesn't follow your advice. Sometimes what works for you will not work for others.
- Plan ahead and be organized so that you have time to listen to the initial educator.
- Plan ways to get to know the initial educator outside the school so that you can build trust in your relationship.
- Remember that you are one of many resources and you can suggest other sources of assistance for the initial educator.
- Reflect on what you are offering the initial educator and be satisfied that you are doing a good job. Don't be overly critical of what you can and can't do.
- Let the initial educator know he or she can be open and honest with personal needs and does not need to fear judgment.
- Discuss problems as well as successes. Sometimes the initial educator might need to vent or wants someone to share an exciting lesson.
- Be available, open, and honest. Be reliable, and follow through with activities.

School districts must realize that once they have created a mentoring program for initial educators, there will be situations in which initial educators will need additional help, and not necessarily from their mentor. Districts should not expect mentors to have all the answers. Part of the mentor role necessitates helping initial educators self-assess their strengths and weaknesses so that they can ascertain what kind of assistance they need. The initial educator must decide if the mentor is the appropriate person from whom to seek advice or help.

The support and coaching from other educational colleagues is also of great value to the initial educator. Even with the support of a mentor, the initial educator benefits from others in the learning community, such as interactions at grade-level, team, or department meetings; collegial discussions at support seminars and all-school inservices; participation in action research projects; observations and analysis in other educator's classrooms; and so forth.

Building principals will want to set aside some time during inservice sessions to acquaint new faculty with the district's policies and procedures and offer an open invitation for further one-on-one conversations when more questions arise. Therefore, all parties involved in the mentor program should not expect that the program will solve all problems or provide all of the support initial educators need.

When mentor programs are effective, teachers report that they are more confident in teaching, feel more support from their supervisor and colleagues, and have a positive perception of the teaching profession. Furthermore, research has shown that some mentor programs have increased educators' rates of retention (American Federation of Teachers 1998). In a retention study of new teachers covering five years (1995–2001) in Wisconsin, Theobald and Michael (2001) found that 39 percent either leave the profession or move on to other school districts. They found that teachers leave the profession when confronted with less desirable situations that cannot be improved by moving to another school district. Strong mentoring programs can help initial educators identify challenges and support them in their continued development. In any case, Wisconsin districts are responsible for providing each of their initial educators with a mentor and this guide provides guidelines for doing so.



## **Initial Educator Support System Example**

### **West Bend School District's Mentoring and Teacher Induction**

New-to-the-district teachers in the West Bend School District receive an extended contract for the first three years of employment. Prior to the school year, teachers come together to learn about district expectations and the support available to reach their goals in their professional growth plan.

Each new-to-the-district teacher is welcomed by a content-area mentor in his or her building, creating a one-to-one match. Seventy-plus mentors are trained in district, based on state expectations, components of the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP), and district expectations. In addition, the district, working collaboratively with WEAC, provides each site a career mentor to facilitate clarity on contract language.

Professional growth plans, which reflect the state criteria (PDP), are currently in place as an integrated component of West Bend's in-district professional growth cycle. To inform the goal-setting process, teachers self assess their knowledge on a rubric designed for each standard, as well as partake in the CESA six-peer feedback process aligned to the standards. Teachers also receive quarterly formative feedback from their mentor using a collaborative log and ongoing dialogue from an interactive notebook—both very powerful components of the SCNTP.

Mentor/mentee monthly support sessions, aligned to the standards, are held at a local coffee-house to mirror the research and phases of teacher needs as the year unfolds.



# Professional Development Planning for the Initial Educator

Educator licensure is a guarantee by the State of Wisconsin that the licensee is able to carry out the demands of the education profession. Multiple levels of licensure and renewal of a license exist to assure the public that its professionals will maintain a commitment to the thoughtful acquisition of knowledge in their individual area(s) of endorsement as well as the application of best educational practices in their area(s) of expertise. The standards for licensure as outlined in Wisconsin Administrative Rules PI 34 for teachers, pupil services personnel, and administrators provide the framework for professional development and license renewal. The planning process for writing a professional development plan (PDP) ensures that Wisconsin educators are broadly informed and highly committed and that they perform actions that will keep Wisconsin school districts places that motivate and engage all students and will result in enhanced student learning.



## Advancement

**PI 34.17(4)(a)** To move to the professional educator level, an initial educator shall design and complete a professional development plan that demonstrates increased proficiency and which reflects the standards in subchapter II that have been identified by the team in sub. (3) for improvement. The plan shall include:

1. Identified activities and objectives related to professional development goals, school or school district goals or performance goals identified by the educator.
2. A timeline for achieving the professional development goals.
3. Evidence of collaboration with professional peers and others.
4. An assessment plan that specifies indicators of growth.

## Licensure Cycle

The PDP is part of a cycle of professional growth. A timeline has been established that provides for meaningful professional development that affects student learning. In the initial educator cycle, the plan may be

completed in three years, but it must be completed within five years. The initial educator licensure timeline is connected to regular employment (not as a substitute) in a position that requires the Initial Educator License; therefore, the license cycle timeline begins at the date of employment. If the initial educator's employment is interrupted, the license may be renewed.

The following is a breakdown of the years in a licensure cycle for an initial educator.

- The first year is for self-reflection, selection of a goal, and formulation of the plan. The plan must be submitted by the initial educator to a PDP Team for goal approval no later than October 1 of the initial educator's second year.
- For years two, three, and four, complete the annual review form and include a reflection summary with any revisions to goal, objectives, and activities. If the initial educator makes substantial revisions to their goal, they must submit the revisions by April 1 to the PDP Team for approval.
- During the final year of the initial educator's licensure cycle, which may be in three years, but no longer than five years, the plan must be submitted to the PDP Team for verification of completion of the PDP.

*(See appendix F for the complete Timeline for the Initial Educator's PDP Process for Advancement to the Professional Educator Stage.)*

## **The Professional Development Plan**

The PDP is based on the Wisconsin Educator Standards, is focused on student learning, and outlines continuous learning and professional improvement for all educators. It is data-driven and self-directed by the initial educator in collaboration with other educators. The PDP serves as a mechanism for license renewal among the initial educator, the PDP Team, and the state superintendent. The purpose of the plan is to increase proficiency and professional development based on the Wisconsin standards and has an affect on student learning.

The Professional Development Plan Educator Toolkit can be found on the DPI website at [dpi.wi.gov/tepd](http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd).

The Wisconsin Educator Standards are used in the professional development planning process to develop a collective agreement of what is expected professionally. The standards assist in developing a dialogue

among educators and will validate what educators know and are able to do. Finally, standards are used for analysis and reflection of performance.

This professional development planning process allows the initial educator the opportunity to direct his or her own professional growth through a written PDP and shows how that growth affects student learning. The following principles provide the foundation for developing PDPs.

#### The PDP

- is a means to work with others to further the educator's vision and goal and improve student learning;
- addresses the needs of the individual educator by enhancing his or her knowledge and skills and thus the quality of student learning;
- addresses two or more of the Educator Standards as outlined in PI 34;
- encourages educators to think outside the box; and
- may include district and/or building initiatives.

## Guidelines for Developing the PDP for Initial Educators

Wisconsin educators progress through four steps when creating and completing a PDP. Mentors may provide support to initial educators as they develop their plan.

### Step 1. Self-Reflection

As defined in the PDP, self-reflection is a dynamic active process that involves the analysis of feedback about the educator's professional performance and its relationship to student learning. Quality PDPs are dependent on ongoing and thoughtful reflection on professional practice. The intent is to improve, expand, and strengthen the educator's teaching, pupil service, or leadership repertoire based on strengths and self-identified needs. Self-reflection constitutes the foundation of the PDP and the educator needs to address the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the Wisconsin Educator Standards.

### Step 2. Writing the Plan

After the period of reflection and self-assessment, the educator can begin to write the plan. There are a number of components that need to be identified:

- Description of the school and teaching, administrative, or pupil services situation;
- Description of the goal(s) to be addressed;
- Rationale for the goal(s) and link to self reflection, educational situation, and standard(s);
- Plan for assessing and documenting the goal(s);
- Plan to meet the goal(s)—objectives, activities, timeline, and collaboration.

Once steps 1 and 2 are completed, the initial educator must submit their goal to the PDP Team for goal approval.

### **Step 3. Annual Review**

The third step, annual review of the plan, comes in years two, three, and four of the educator's licensure cycle. The annual review information should include a reflection and summary of growth made throughout the year and any revisions to goal(s), objectives, and activities. If the initial educator makes substantial revisions to the goal(s), approval by the PDP Team will be required.

### **Step 4. Completion of the Plan**

The last step, completion of the plan, consists of a summary and reflection statement of how the educator grew professionally over the licensure cycle and how that growth affected student learning. Three to five pieces of evidence are needed to document completion of the PDP.

Creating the PDP should be a thoughtful, ongoing process. It is recommended that the initial educator use their first year of teaching for self-reflection, subsequent years to document their professional growth, and the final year to provide evidence and documentation of their growth through submitting their PDP for verification. The PI 34 rules require that all initial educators receive support and assistance as they seek advance licensure. Clearly, the mentor will play a key role as the initial educator seeks to grow professionally and affect student learning.

## **PDP Team for the Initial Educator**

The PDP Team approves the goal for initial educators and verifies completion of the plan. The PDP Team is composed of:

- One peer (teacher, administrator, or pupil services personnel)
- One administrator
- One higher education representative (IHE)



## Initial Educator Team

**PI 34.17(3)** A team of individuals shall be convened at the discretion of the initial educator and shall be responsible for review and approval of the initial educator professional development goals. Teams for review shall be constituted as follows:

**(a)** For classroom teachers, the team shall include a teacher of the same subject or at the same level who is not the mentor and who is selected by teacher peers, an administrator designated by the district administrator subject to approval by the school board and an IHE representative.

The PI 34 rule for the initial educator states that the initial educator convenes the team. PDP teacher team members are selected through a peer review process. The IHE team member is designated by a Wisconsin institution of higher education. The administrator team member is designated by the school district administrator subject to approval by the school board. Therefore, a list would be available that an initial educator could use when selecting team members.



## Initial Educator Support System Example

### Shawano-Gresham School District PDPs for All Staff

Between 2002–2004, professional staff in the Shawano-Gresham School District wrote over seventy PDPs as part of the PI 34 field test. Both initial educators and veteran teachers developed plans. The creation of PDPs for initial and professional educators included a list of activities, timelines for achievement, and assessments based on the Wisconsin Educator Standards.

These field-tested PDPs can serve as a model for plans that can be used by educators for movement between license stages or for license renewal as PI 34 is implemented. Through the field test, it was discovered that one of the most important components in designing an effective PDP was the process of self-reflection the teachers had undergone. Because the rules require that all initial educators receive support and assistance as they complete their PDP, the mentor can help guide this self-reflective process.

Another pleasant surprise from this field test was that the PDP process was very well received and welcomed by veteran educators, even more than by new teachers, because of the increased flexibility it allows for license renewal.



# Conclusion

Through the passage of PI 34, the DPI has enacted education licensing reform that will help support initial educators as they work to receive their initial educator license. With the projected demand for new teachers and the expected attrition from the profession, the most cost-effective method of ensuring a supply of well-qualified teachers is to reduce the number of teachers who leave the profession.

The experiences of the first days and years are critical and can either positively or negatively impact a teacher's career. The initial teaching experience affects not only the teacher but also, more importantly, students themselves. Clearly, support systems for initial educators can be crucial in ensuring that a teacher successfully makes the transition from beginning educator to competent veteran positively impacting the lives of many students along the way.

Although many Wisconsin school districts provide informal support to the initial educator, this guide was designed for administrators and others who are responsible for the implementation of PI 34 regarding initial educators. Administrative leaders and district steering committees will begin to determine the ways in which initial educator support systems will be implemented within their districts as they set up mentor selection and training and continue the development of ongoing orientation and support seminars.

APPENDIX

A

## **District-Wide Initial Educator Support System**



# District-Wide Initial Educator Support System

## Sample Checklist

**Purpose of the checklist:** for school district personnel to consider as they design an initial educator support system that is consistent with PI 34.

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### District-Wide Support System

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- ☐ District steering committee to oversee support system (e.g., teachers, administrators, parents, support staff, and school board)
  - Determine philosophy, goals, and objectives of support system
  - Identify administrative leader and other building support to sustain support system
  - Define who will be considered an initial educator
- ☐ Collaboration with others (e.g., local IHEs, CESA)
- ☐ Evaluation Framework for the system (data collection, modifications according to need)

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### Initial Educator Support

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- ☐ Ongoing orientation
  - Local information (e.g., district mission/goals, policies/procedures, etc.)
  - Collaboratively developed and delivered (e.g., school board, administrators, teachers, support staff, parents)
- ☐ Support seminars
  - Flexible, educator-centered, based on needs assessment
  - Reflects the WI standards and mission and goals of the district
  - Ongoing and numerous sessions
- ☐ Initial educator team
  - Approval of goal for initial educators
  - Verifies completion of the initial educator's PDP

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### Mentor Program

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- ☐ Coordination/administrative responsibilities to oversee the mentor program
- ☐ Mentor selection process
  - Licensed as a professional educator
  - Other qualities (criteria TBD by district)
- ☐ Mentor training (includes knowledge, dispositions, and performances for mentoring a professional peer or colleague)
- ☐ Mentor-mentee accountability
  - Classroom/site visits
  - Meeting logs and/or reflective journals
  - Set goals & evaluate
  - Collaborate with initial educator's PDP



# Relevant Rules in Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter PI 34

## PI 34.01 Definitions

(34) “Mentor” means an educator who is trained to provide support and assistance to initial educators and who will have input into the confidential formative assessment of the initial educator and who is not to be considered as part of the formal employment evaluation process.

## PI 34.17 Initial Educator License

(1) **GENERAL.** (a) An initial educator license may be issued to an individual who meets the requirements of this chapter, including the completion of an approved program with institutional endorsement or as demonstrated by a state superintendent approved assessment program under sub. (6) that meets the standards under subchapter II.

(b) The initial educator license shall be issued for a period of 5 years and is a non-renewable license unless the individual has not been employed as an educator for at least 2 years within the 5-year period.

(c) A one-year nonrenewable initial educator license may be issued to an applicant who meets the license requirements under this chapter but who has not completed the requirements under sub. (4).

(d) The initial educator license stage shall be required one time for licenses under each of subchapters VII, VIII, and IX.

(2) **SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS.** (a) The initial educator shall receive ongoing orientation from the employing school district which is collaboratively developed and delivered by school boards, administrators, teachers, support staff and parents.

(b) The initial educator shall be provided support seminars by the employing school district which reflect the standards in subchapter II and the mission and goals of the school district.

(c) The initial educator shall be provided with a qualified mentor by the employing school district. The mentoring period may be for less than 5 years.

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A complete listing of the Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter PI 34 can be found at the following DPI website: [dpi.wi.gov/tepdll](http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdll).

**(3) INITIAL EDUCATOR TEAM.** A team of individuals shall be convened at the discretion of the initial educator and shall be responsible for review and approval of the initial educator professional development goals. Teams for review shall be constituted as follows:

- (a) For classroom teachers, the team shall include a teacher of the same subject or at the same level who is not the mentor and who is selected by teacher peers, an administrator designated by the district administrator subject to approval by the school board and an IHE representative.
- (b) For pupil services educators, the team shall include a pupil services professional in the same license category who is not the mentor and who is selected by peers, an administrator designated by the district administrator subject to approval by the school board and an IHE representative.
- (c) For administrators, the team shall include an administrator in the same license category who is not the mentor and who is selected by peers, an administrator designated by the district administrator subject to approval by the school board and an IHE representative.
- (d) Participation in the teams required under sub. (3) (a) to (c) by institution representatives may be used to meet the requirement in s. PI 34.11 (2) (d).
- (e) Nothing in this subsection shall limit the school board and the labor organization, where one exists, which represents licensed staff, and other licensed staff, from designing a district-wide agreement in lieu of meeting the specific requirements of paragraphs (a) to (c). The agreement shall be submitted to the state superintendent for approval.

**(4) ADVANCEMENT.** (a) To move to the professional educator level, an initial educator shall design and complete a professional development plan that demonstrates increased proficiency and which reflects the standards in subchapter II that have been identified by the team in sub. (3) for improvement. The plan shall include:

- 1. Identified activities and objectives related to professional development goals, school or school district goals or performance goals identified by the educator.
  - 2. A timeline for achieving the professional development goals.
  - 3. Evidence of collaboration with professional peers and others.
  - 4. An assessment plan that specifies indicators of growth.
- (b) Successful completion of the professional development plan shall be documented. The documentation may include but is not lim-

ited to evidence of whole group and individual student performance as measured by state, local, formal and informal assessments; lesson plans; supervisor and mentor comments of classroom performance; journals documenting samples of pupil errors and analysis of teacher interpretations of errors; ongoing documentation of classroom management techniques and results; and curriculum adaptations for children with disabilities or other exceptionalities with related outcome measures. The documentation portfolio may also include evidence that identifies professional development activities related to the professional development goals. The evidence may be in the form of samples of pupil work, letters of recommendation; evidence of attending professional meetings, workshops, conferences or seminars; administrative or supervisory evaluations; peer evaluations; journals, diaries or published articles; action research projects and results; college, university or technical college course work; or evidence of in-district work assignments outside of the classroom.

- (c) Nothing in this subsection shall limit the school board and the labor organization, where one exists, which represents licensed staff, and other licensed staff, from designing a district-wide agreement in lieu of meeting the specific requirements of paragraphs (a) to (b). The agreement shall be submitted to the state superintendent for approval.
- (d) Successful completion of the initial educator stage shall be measured at the initiation of the initial educator no sooner than 3 years but no later than 5 years after the license is granted. A majority of the three-member panel described in sub. (3) shall verify successful completion of the professional development plan. Appeals of decisions made by the 3-member team may be made as follows:
  - 1. For teachers and pupil services professionals, appeals shall be made to the state superintendent. The professional standards council may establish procedures to hear appeals referred. If the professional standards council agrees to hear an appeal, it shall, upon completion of its deliberations, make a recommendation to the state superintendent. The state superintendent shall issue a decision concerning the appeal.
  - 2. For administrators and individuals who wish to contest decisions under subd. 1., appeals shall be made to the state superintendent as prescribed under s. PI 34.35 (8).

**(5) OUT OF STATE APPLICANTS.** An initial educator license may be issued to an applicant who completes an approved program from out of

state, who has fewer than 5 years of successful teaching experience, and who has met the competency test requirements under s. PI 34.15 (2) (a) 3. a. The applicant shall provide evidence that the requirements under s. PI 34.15 (4) have been met before qualifying for a professional educator license.

**(6) LICENSE BASED ON EQUIVALENCY.** (a) An initial educator license may be issued to an applicant who has not completed an approved program, if the applicant has obtained a statement from an institution that the applicant has completed the equivalent of that institution's approved program, and if the applicant meets all of the requirements of this chapter.

(b) An initial educator license may be issued to an applicant who completes department approved standards-based training and assessments for the license. The assessment requirement shall include receiving a passing score on a standardized examination approved by the state superintendent in the area of licensure and in teaching knowledge. An initial license may also be issued to an applicant who has demonstrated competence through an assessment process, approved by the state superintendent, that meets the standards under subchapter II, including any standardized examinations prescribed by the state superintendent for licensure.

(c) An initial educator license may be issued to an applicant who has completed an alternative training program approved by the state superintendent that is provided by, but not limited to, a college or university, school, school district, CESA, consortia, technical college, private enterprise or agency. Each alternative training program shall be based on the standards under subchapter II and shall include assessment of candidate performance as measured against the standards, including any standardized examinations prescribed by the state superintendent for licensure.

(d) 1. The state superintendent shall insure that program providers under pars. (b) and (c) have adequate resources to support teaching by faculty and learning by students. The state superintendent shall insure that program providers under pars. (b) and (c) have sufficient budgetary resources to fulfill their mission and offer quality programs.

2. The program provider, in collaboration with the department, shall systematically evaluate and report to the public graduate performance in obtaining employment in Wisconsin schools or school districts as well as graduate performance in advancing from the initial to professional educator license and master educator license after the first 5 years of employment.

**(7) LICENSE BASED ON EXPERIENCE.** An initial educator license may be issued to an applicant who presents evidence of having completed an approved program in another state except student teaching if the applicant verifies 3 or more years of successful teaching experience in the subject or grade level of preparation and if the applicant meets all of the applicable requirements of this chapter.





## C

# Subchapter II— Wisconsin Standards

To receive a license to teach, or in an administrator or pupil services category, in Wisconsin, an applicant shall complete an approved program and demonstrate proficient performance in the knowledge, skills and dispositions under all of the following standards:

## Subchapter II—PI 34.02 Teacher Standards

- (1) The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for pupils.
- (2) The teacher understands how children with broad ranges of ability learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social, and personal development.
- (3) The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities.
- (4) The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies, including the use of technology to encourage children's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
- (5) The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- (6) The teacher uses effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- (7) The teacher organizes and plans systematic instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, pupils, the community, and curriculum goals.
- (8) The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the pupil.
- (9) The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effect of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- (10) The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support pupil learning and well being and who acts with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

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A complete listing of the Wisconsin Educator Standards can be found at the following DPI website: [dpi.wi.gov/tepdll](http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdll).

## **Subchapter II—PI 34.03 Administrator Standards**

- (1) The administrator has an understanding of and demonstrates competence in the teacher standards under s. PI 34.02.
- (2) The administrator leads by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared by the school community.
- (3) The administrator manages by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to pupil learning and staff professional growth.
- (4) The administrator ensures management of the organization, operations, finances, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
- (5) The administrator models collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
- (6) The administrator acts with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
- (7) The administrator understands, responds to, and interacts with the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context that affects schooling.

## **Subchapter II—PI 34.04 Pupil Services Standards**

- (1) The pupil services professional understands the teacher standards under s. PI 34.02.
- (2) The pupil services professional understands the complexities of learning and knowledge of comprehensive, coordinated practice strategies that support pupil learning, health, safety and development.
- (3) The pupil services professional has the ability to use research, research methods and knowledge about issues and trends to improve practice in schools and classrooms.
- (4) The pupil services professional understands and represents professional ethics and social behaviors appropriate for school and community.
- (5) The pupil services professional understands the organization, development, management and content of collaborative and mutually supportive pupil services programs within educational settings.
- (6) The pupil services professional is able to address comprehensively the wide range of social, emotional, behavioral and physical issues and circumstances which may limit pupils' abilities to achieve positive learning outcomes through development, implementation and evaluation of system-wide interventions and strategies.
- (7) The pupil services professional interacts successfully with pupils, parents, professional educators, employers, and community support systems such as juvenile justice, public health, human services and adult education.

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## APPENDIX

# D

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# Online Resources

## APPENDIX

# E

**American Federation of Teachers—<http://www.aft.org>**

A variety of print and online resources for mentors and their beginning teachers.

**Beginning Teacher's ToolBox—<http://www.inspiringteachers.com>**

Includes an Ask Our Mentor a Question section, Tips for New Teachers, and the Beginning Teachers Message Board.

**Center for Cognitive Coaching—<http://www.cognitivecoaching.cc>**

The exclusive site for information about Cognitive Coaching, including trainers' profiles, events, and products.

**Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science**

**Education—<http://www.enc.org>**

A rich array of ideas and free information, including lesson plans, curriculum units, software, professional development opportunities, and web links.

**Mentor Bibliography—<http://www.teachermentors.com>**

Recommended reading in a variety of categories pertinent to beginning teachers and their mentors.

**Mentor Support Center—<http://www.teachers.net>**

Chatboards in category-specific chats such as beginning teachers.

**National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do—<http://www.nbpts.org>**

**National Education Association—<http://www.nea.org>**

A variety of resources and current research on teaching and induction, including A Better Beginning: Helping New Teachers Survive and Thrive— A Guide for Creating Support Systems for New Teachers—<http://www.nea.org/teachershortage/betterbeginnings.html>.

**National Education Association Foundation for Improvement in Education—<http://www.nfie.org/publications/mentoring/html>**

News and publications, including extensive and current information on creating a teacher mentoring program.

**New Teacher Center, University of California Santa Cruz—**

**<http://www.newteachercenter.org>**

Multiple resources for mentors and beginning teachers, including a free newsletter and other full-text resources.

**Promising Practices: New Ways to Improve Teacher Quality—<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/PromPractices>**

Includes a full chapter on the induction of new teachers.

**Questia—<http://www.questia.com>**

A comprehensive online library of available print resources on mentoring, including books and journal articles.

**U.S. Department of Education—<http://www.ed.gov/index.jsp>**

A wealth of resources targeted for induction programs, including The Survival Guide for New Teachers, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/survivalguide>—ideas for new teachers to effectively work with veteran colleagues, parents, principals, and teacher educators; The New Teacher's Guide to the U.S. Department of Education, [http://oeri.ed.gov/pubs/Teachers Guide](http://oeri.ed.gov/pubs/Teachers%20Guide)—a guide to finding useful information from the U.S. Department of Education; What to Expect Your First Year of Teaching, [http://www.ed.gov/pubs/First Year](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/First%20Year)—a guide for mentors to share with their protégés, full of tips, a “help desk” of resources, and a free online book containing award-winning first-year teachers' experiences.

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing Team—[dpi.wi.gov/tepdll](http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdll)**

APPENDIX

F

**Timeline for the Initial  
Educator's PDP Process for  
Advancement to the  
Professional Educator Stage**

## Timeline for the Initial Educator's PDP Process for Advancement to the Professional Educator Stage

Time Frame	Component	Description	PDP Form
Year one of your employment/ license cycle	Preparing to Write the Plan—Self-Reflection	The first year of employment is for self-reflection, selection of a goal, and formulation of the plan.	PDP Step I
By October 1 of year two of your employment/license cycle	Writing the Plan— Components	You are required to write a PDP and submit it to a PDP Team for their approval of the goal(s). You are responsible for initiating this review with the PDP Team.  If you have identified more than one goal in your plan, you must follow Step II, A–E, for each goal.	PDP Step I and Step II, A–E
December 1	Goal Approval by PDP Team	A PDP Team reviews your plan. A two-thirds majority is needed for goal approval.	PDP Goal Approval Form
January 15–June 1	Goal Revisions	If a majority of the PDP Team does not approve your goal, comments are given, and you must resubmit your revised goal.	PDP Step I and Step II, A–E
Years two, three, four	Documentation of Annual Review	It is your responsibility to review your plan annually, including a reflection summary and any revisions to your goal(s), objectives, and activities each year of your license cycle except the first and last years.  These annual reviews must be submitted to the PDP Team as part of your completion plan.	PDP Step III
April 1	Plan Revisions	If there are substantial revisions to your plan, you must submit the annual review to the PDP Team each year revisions are made.	PDP Step III
July 1–January 15 during the final year of your employment/ license cycle	Documentation of Completion of the Plan	It is your responsibility to document and submit your completed plan and include your approved and signed Goal Approval Form to the PDP Team for their review and verification.	PDP Step IV
April 1	Verification of Completion of the Plan by the PDP Team	The PDP Team will review your plan and verify documentation of completion of the plan.	PDP Verification Form
January 15–June 1	Completion Plan Revisions	If a majority does not verify your plan, comments are given, and you must resubmit your revised completion plan to a PDP Team for verification.	PDP Step IV
June 1	DPI Notification	You are responsible for submitting the signed PDP Verification Form along with your completed application and appropriate fee(s) to the DPI for license renewal.	PDP Verification Form

